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Action/Information

Legislative Committee of the Whole

Analyses of Bills of Interest to the Commission

Executive Summary: Staff will present analyses of educator preparation or licensing bills introduced by Legislators. The analyses will summarize current law, describe the bills provisions, estimate its costs, recommend amendments if applicable, and presuppose a recommendation.

Recommended Action: The Commission will be asked to take a position on the measures. Positions of the Commission to consider are: Sponsor, Support, Support if Amended, Approve, Approve if Amended, Seek Amendments, Watch, Disapprove, Oppose Unless Amended, and Oppose.

Presenter: Anne Padilla, Consultant, Office of Governmental Relations

Strategic Plan Goal: 4

Continue effective and appropriate involvement of the Commission with policymaker's on key education issue.

- ◆ Influence legislation regarding the preparation and certification of professional educators.

ANALYSES OF BILLS OF INTEREST TO THE COMMISSION

Bill Number: Assembly Bill 309

Author: Assembly Member Walters

Sponsor: Assembly Member Walters

Subject of Bill: Teaching Credentials and Student Achievement

Date Introduced: February 9, 2005

Status in Leg. Process: Introduced: May be heard in committee
March 12th

Recommended Position: Oppose Unless Amended

Date of Analysis: February 14, 2005

Analyst: Marilyn Errett and Anne Padilla

Summary of Current Law

Section 44225 of the Education Code specifies that the Commission shall establish standards, assessments, and examinations for entry and advancement in the education profession. The Education Code also expresses legislative intent that the credentialing structure be two-tiered and include preliminary and professional levels. Education Code section 44259 delineates the minimum statutory requirements for multiple subject and single subject teaching credentials.

Section 44259 (b) specifies the following requirements for a preliminary credential earned in California:

- A baccalaureate degree or higher degree from a regionally accredited institution of postsecondary education. The baccalaureate degree shall not be in Education.

- Passage of the basic skills examination (California Basic Educational Skills Test).
- Satisfactory completion of a program of professional preparation that has been accredited by the Commission's Committee on Accreditation on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness that have been adopted by the Commission.
- Study of methods for teaching English learners. (Section 44259.5 ©)
- Study of the teaching of reading. (The multiple subject credential requires passage of the Reading Instruction Competency Assessment per section 44283.)
- Completion of a subject matter program that has been approved by the Commission on the basis of standards of program quality and effectiveness (Section 44310) or passage of a subject matter examination (Section 44280). (The multiple subject credential now requires passage of the CSET: Multiple Subjects exam to comply with the federal No Child Left Behind Act.)
- Demonstration of knowledge of the principles and provisions of the Constitution of the United States (Section 44335).
- Demonstration of basic competency in the use of computers in the classroom.

Section 44259 © specifies the following requirements for a professional clear credential earned in California:

- Possession of a valid preliminary or intern teaching credential.
- Completion of a Commission-approved beginning teacher induction program or, when such a program is unavailable, completion of a Commission-approved fifth-year program offered by a university.
- Study of health education, including nutrition, CPR and the effects of alcohol, narcotics and drug abuse.
- Study and field experience in methods of delivering appropriate educational services to pupils with exceptional needs in regular education programs.
- Study of advanced computer-based technology, including uses in educational settings.
- Advanced study of teaching English learners. (Commencing 7/1/05, section 44259.5 (e))

Education Code section 44300 requires school districts to provide to the Commission evidence of a diligent search for a credentialed teacher before hiring an individual to serve on an emergency permit. Finally, Education Code section 44225.7 provides a guideline for conditions under which the Commission may issue emergency teaching permits or credential waivers as follows:

If a suitable fully prepared teacher is not available to the school district, the district shall make reasonable efforts to recruit an individual for the assignment, in the following order:

1. A candidate who is scheduled to complete initial preparation requirements within six months.
2. A candidate who is qualified to participate in an approved internship program in the region of the school district.

Education Code section 44225.7 further directs the Commission to communicate to school districts that credentialed teachers and interns should be considered before considering an emergency permit applicant and that emergency permits and waivers should eventually be restricted to use in geographically isolated areas or when an unanticipated hiring need arises.

Summary of Current Activity by the Commission

There are various routes for obtaining a preliminary multiple subject or single subject teaching credential designed to meet individual experience, background and schedules. These routes include the following:

- Graduate level one-year program including student teaching. (Section 44259)
- Undergraduate “blended program” integrating subject matter degree course work with teaching methods courses and early field experiences. (Section 44259.1)
- Internship program sponsored by a university or by a school district with pre-service course work, a paid internship as the teacher of record, and including structured mentoring, assessment and ongoing course work. (Sections 44452, 44325)
- Expedited internship allowing the individual to “test out” of the specific teacher preparation course work, and including a performance assessment during a shortened intern period. (Section 44468)
- Teaching experience in the Peace Corps in lieu of the specific teacher preparation course work.
- Six years of private school teaching experience in lieu of the specific teacher preparation course work.
- Commission appeals based on experience in lieu of the specific teacher preparation course work.

In addition, there are alternative routes for obtaining a professional clear multiple subject or single subject teaching. These routes include the following:

- Expedited induction allowing the individual to complete an induction program by meeting specified assessment criteria. (Section 44468).
- National Board Certification. (Sections 44398, 44399).
- A Commission-approved internship-through-induction program.

At its February 1, 2005 meeting, the Commission, in a public hearing, adopted additions to the California Code of Regulations, Title 5 pertaining to the Short-Term Staff Permit and Provisional Internship Permit to replace the current emergency permits by June 30, 2006.

Analysis of Bill Provisions

AB 309 would require the Commission to conduct a study to determine if there is a positive correlation between the employment of credentialed teachers and pupil achievement. The study would compare the achievement of pupils taught by teachers who received their teaching credentials from the California State University in the years 2001 to 2003 with the achievement of pupils taught by teachers serving on emergency permits. Requirements of the study would include a match of teacher characteristics as well as comparable demographic data of the pupils. Pupil achievement would be measured by performance on the Standardized Testing and Reporting (STAR) tests. The Commission would be required to submit a report of its findings and conclusions to the Legislature on or before November 1, 2006.

The intent of the measure is specified as follows:

While there is a widespread belief that teacher credentialing programs produce superior teachers, the evidence is mixed as to whether pupils taught by credentialed teachers obtain higher levels of academic achievement. The goal of placing a teacher who is deemed qualified in every classroom increases the emphasis on teacher credentialing, yet places barriers to attracting more teachers.

It is, therefore, the intent of the Legislature to gather and examine evidence to determine whether continuing the state's existing teacher credentialing requirements is beneficial.

Analysis of Fiscal Impact of Bill

Due to staff reductions and existing workload, the Commission would need to contract with a researcher to conduct this study. Absent language in the bill that would direct districts to

release data to the researcher, the contractor would need to spend a significant amount of time working with school districts to determine which teachers were prepared in a CSU program and to obtain STAR test data per classroom for the students of these teachers. (The Commission can identify where teachers were prepared, but does not track teachers in their employment situations.) Researchers would also have to work with school districts to determine which individuals serving on emergency permits had been the teacher of record for the entire school year. Release of the STAR information at this level could also pose legal challenges. Because many emergency permit holders have neared completion of a teacher preparation program, the researcher might also need to determine exactly how much preparation each individual had in order to obtain a meaningful comparison. This would add costs for the research as well as to the school districts. Because of the many variables evident in of this type of research, a large number of individuals in the study would be necessary to allow for statistically significant results.

Based on previous research contracts, Commission staff estimates a cost of approximately \$750,000 to \$1.0 million to conduct this study. An appropriation from the General Fund for this amount would be needed to cover the cost of the study. Additionally, the tight timeframe for the study could limit the number of proposals that would be received through a competitive RFP process.

Analysis of Relevant Legislative Policies by the Commission

The following Legislative policies apply to this measure:

1. The Commission opposes legislation that would give it significant additional duties and responsibilities if the legislation does not include an appropriate source of funding to support those additional duties and responsibilities.

Organizational Positions on the Bill

None known at this time.

Suggested Amendments

Staff recommends the following amendments to AB 309:

- Include an adequate appropriation of funds from the General Fund to support the study.
- Extend the report deadline by one year to ensure contractor interest.
Direct school districts identify teachers who were prepared in a CSU teacher preparation program in 2001-2003.

- Direct school districts and the California Department of Education to provide classroom level STAR test data and teacher characteristics information in a timely manner.
- Ensure a meaningful comparison between credentialed teachers and emergency permit teachers by clarifying the amount and type of teacher preparation when defining characteristics of emergency permit teachers.

Reason for Suggested Position

While a study exploring teacher preparation levels and possible links to student achievement could add valuable information to the ongoing national debate, the expectation inherent in AB 309 that such a study could be undertaken at no cost is erroneous. Further, careful consideration regarding timelines, data collection, identifying teachers for comparison groups, studying a large enough population to determine viable findings and generalization throughout the state are a few of the issues that arise when considering this measure. Finally, it should be clarified that emergency permit teachers are not required to meet full subject matter requirements and are therefore not considered compliant with the federal No Child Left Behind Act. For these reasons, staff recommends a position of **Oppose Unless Amended** on AB 309.

